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Indiana State Department of Health

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TO: Local Health Departments

FROM: Alan M. Dunn, Chief *AMD*
Residential Sewage Disposal Section
Division of Sanitary Engineering
AC (317) 633-0160

SUBJECT: Residential On-Site Sewage Disposal
Specifications for Distribution Boxes
ISDH Rule 410 IAC 6-8.1-41

Section 41 of Indiana State Department of Health Rule 410 IAC 6-8.1, effective December 21, 1990, outlines the minimum requirements for distribution boxes for residential on-site sewage disposal systems. Little research has been conducted regarding optimal dimensions of a distribution box. The dimensions specified in Section 41 were drawn from requirements which were specified by the State of Virginia.

The manufacturers of some of the distribution boxes who believe that they are in substantial compliance with our rule have requested a review of the standards relating to the minimum dimensions for distribution boxes.

We are researching this issue with the cooperation of Purdue University, local health departments, and distribution box manufacturers and distributors. As a part of the study, we intend to monitor the installation and use of a representative sampling of distribution boxes. We plan to finish our work and compile the results by the end of this year for inclusion in revisions to Rule 410 IAC 6-8.1. If our results support the amendment of the current minimum requirements for distribution boxes, you will be notified of those amendments as soon as they are available.

While we are conducting this research, we will permit the installation on an experimental basis under Rule 410 IAC 6-8.1-31(g) of distribution boxes whose dimensions do not fully satisfy the minimum provisions of Section 41 of our rule. During this period of research, local health departments may use their best judgment concerning the minimum width, freeboard, and depth below the invert elevation of the effluent ports required for each distribution box approved for installation under the provisions of Section 31(g) of our residential sewage disposal rule.

The following conditions will still apply to the approval of all distribution boxes:

1. Each of the distribution boxes approved must be designed to split the effluent flow equally among the effluent ports as required by Rule 410 IAC 6-8.1-41(c). In order to accomplish this objective, the influent port must be located or baffled in order to prevent unequal distribution of the effluent. A ninety (90) degree elbow turned down as described in that section of the rule may be used in lieu of the baffle.
2. The distribution box must meet the specifications for materials and strength outlined in Section 41(b) of the rule.
3. Installation procedures shall follow the provisions of Section 41(d) of the rule.

If you have any questions, please give me a call.